



Connecticut School Transportation Association

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Statement by
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Before the
Transportation Committee
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**S. B. No. 340 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING PUBLIC SERVICE LICENSE
ENDORSEMENTS, ACTIVITY VEHICLES, AND THE DEFINITIONS OF
"CARRIER" AND "STUDENT TRANSPORTATION VEHICLE"**

**H.B. No. 5387 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE REMOVAL OF SNOW AND
ICE FROM MOTOR VEHICLES**

Sen. DeFronzo, Representative Guerrero, Honorable Members of the Transportation Committee:

My name is William D. Moore. I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut School Transportation Association -- COSTA. COSTA is a trade association comprised of owners and operators of school buses, student transportation vehicles and other associate members. Our membership of more than 125 companies and Boards of Education includes nearly all of the providers of student transportation in Connecticut. Our industry safely operates more than 10,000 school buses and student transportation vehicles (STVs) that safely transport nearly 500,000 children to and from school safely every day.

I am appearing before you today regarding Raised H.B. No. 5272, *An Act Concerning Evidence of Failure to Stop for a School Bus*. COSTA supports this measure and respectfully requests that the Judiciary Committee report it out favorably. This measure provides that a still or video image of a vehicle passing a stopped school bus may constitute sufficient proof of the registration number of such vehicle so as to allow the owner thereof to be deemed the operator and charged with a violation.

The industry takes school bus safety very seriously. The safe transportation of children to and from school and to and from school activities is the most important priority for our members. Student transportation providers are well aware that the passengers that they are carrying are more valuable than anything else that anyone can transport.

SAFETY • SERVICE

It is for this reason that we support the provisions contained in S. B. No. 340 (RAISED) *An Act Concerning Public Service License Endorsements, Activity Vehicles, and the Definitions of "Carrier" and "Student Transportation Vehicle."* By doing away with the classification of "Activity Vehicle", those drivers who are transporting children to and from school related activities will fall under the requirements of Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) regulations related to driver training.

As you know, "Activity Vehicles" are a subset of "Student Transportation Vehicles" (STVs). Under the current regulations, activity vehicle drivers are not required to undergo driver training. While most major carriers require all of their drivers to undergo annual training as required by the DMV, not all carriers do. The training requirements are quite explicit and serve to reinforce good driving procedures. As contained in Section 14-276a-4 of the DMV Regulations, the following is the minimum content of the ten-hour pre-service training for school bus and STV drivers:

- Training to obtain a commercial driver's license, if such license is required by law
- Techniques for conducting a pre-trip safety inspection and completing a driver's vehicle inspection report (DVIR) as required by Section 14-275c-41 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies
- Loading and unloading procedures
- Procedures for crossing railroad tracks
- Emergency procedures, accident management and evacuation, and instruction relative to the location, contents and use of the first aid kit in the school bus;
- Motor vehicle laws and regulations; and
- Use of passenger restraint systems and special equipment for students with mobility impairments if the driver intends to operate a vehicle so equipped.

In addition to these minimum required topics, carriers add other topics that provide for a well-trained, professional driving staff. Following the pre-service training, drivers are then required to take a minimum of six-hours of annual training on the following topics:

- Seasonal safety problems affecting driving, and loading and unloading procedures
- Student management
- Emergency procedures including first aid and universal precautions
- Substance use and abuse
- Communication skills
- Activity trip procedures
- Characteristics of students with disabilities; and
- Updates of laws, regulations and policies.

Again, carriers add other topics that provide for a well-trained, professional driving staff.

We believe that it is essential for drivers to be regularly trained. A well-trained driving staff provides additional safety for the passengers and for the motoring public.

We also believe that the bill should be amended so that the drivers of "Camp Vehicles" (Line 139 – 141) would also be required to undergo the same training as school bus drivers and STV drivers.

Regarding H.B. No. 5387 (RAISED) *An Act Concerning the Removal of Snow and Ice from Motor Vehicles*, we respectfully urge the Committee to exempt school buses from the measure.

Simply put, there is no equipment that can be used to clear the school buses of snow and ice from the roofs of school buses. There is no real way to safely clear rooftops. You cannot put a ladder on snow or ice – that is an OSHA violation. There are no manual scrapers that would completely remove snow, and definitely not ice. As the members of this Committee know, the roofs of school buses have emergency exits. As a result, when driven under one, drive-through scrapers rip the emergency hatches off the top of the bus. School buses generally do not reach speeds that cause the snow and ice to fly off the roofs.

For these reasons, we respectfully request to be exempted from the bill.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before you.

I will be happy to answer any questions that you might have.